



*Office of the United States Attorney*  
*District of Arizona*  
**José de Jesus Rivera**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 22, 1999**

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
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### **TEN ARRESTED FOR SMUGGLING UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS THROUGH THE DESERT ON FOOT**

**TUCSON, ARIZONA** -- Border Patrol and Immigration and Naturalization (INS) agents have arrested 10 people, over the past two days, for smuggling illegal aliens across the Arizona-Mexico Border, on foot. Fifteen undocumented aliens have also been taken into custody after the execution of search warrants. Four of the aliens were kept as material witnesses and the other 11 individuals requested, and were granted, voluntary return to Mexico. An additional five undocumented aliens were taken into custody pursuant to search warrants that were served this morning. The investigation revealed, and the complaints allege, that the defendants who operated the smuggling operations, while run separately, utilized the same stash houses and transportation providers. In addition, it is reported that the undocumented aliens who were discovered had crossed the Arizona desert, on foot.

The U.S. Attorney's Office issued three criminal complaints for the defendants in this case. The first complaint alleges that **ANTONIO HERNANDEZ-SANCHEZ, RUBEN HERNANDEZ-SANCHEZ,** and **LUZ MARIA LOPEZ-ALVAREZ** operated an alien smuggling operation from Eloy, Arizona. The defendant's are accused of transporting undocumented aliens from Mexico to the United States, at or near Sasabe, Arizona, and from there, to Eloy, Arizona. **MARICELA VELAZCO-PARGA** is accused, in two complaints, of housing undocumented aliens in her house and for collecting the proceeds of the smuggling operation from a local Western Union. **PATSY JANE RODRIGUEZ** is accused, in two complaints, of

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coordinating the transportation of the undocumented aliens and for collecting money from Western Union on behalf of the smuggling organization. **GRACIELA BANDA-QUESADA** and **INDALECIO LANGORIA-GARCIA** are accused, in two complaints, of harboring and assisting with the transportation of the undocumented aliens by providing transportation of the aliens between stash houses and registering cars in their names that were for the benefit of the smuggling operation.

**LAZARO VALENCIA-CRUZ** was charged in a separate criminal complaint with transporting and harboring illegal aliens. On July 20, 1999, **VALENCIA-CRUZ** was arrested at his residence in Eloy, Arizona. It is alleged that the defendant had conspired with more than one smuggling operation and agreed to serve as a stash house for undocumented aliens. **“BANDALON” LNU** and **JUAN LNU** are charged as part of the conspiracy for paying **VALENCIA-CRUZ** for housing undocumented aliens on his property.

In a third complaint, **LEONCIO CHIMEO-REYES** and **“PAQUITO” LNU** are accused of smuggling aliens from Mexico to Eloy, Arizona. The undocumented aliens were then taken to stash house to await transportation.

Mr. Rivera stressed that a complaint is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and an individual's guilt is only established upon conviction.

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